

Thousands of Chileans Protest to Demand New Constitution



Santiago de Chile, November 24 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Thousands of Chileans took to the streets of the capital on Sunday to demand the country adopt a new constitution by means of a constituent assembly.

President Michelle Bachelet, who is currently serving in a non-consecutive second term, pledged to review Chile's constitution as part of her election platform last year. Since then however, Bachelet has expressed favoring legislative reform of the constitution rather than having opening up the process to citizen participation.

Police reported that nearly 3,500 attend the rally while organizers estimate that at least 10,000 people demonstrated in the main avenue of the city.

Demonstrators say the country's current constitution is illegitimate because it was written and passed during the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet in 1980, and also includes a number of political mechanisms, such as the complex and highly criticized electoral system, that were designed to prevent political and structural change.

The demonstration was peaceful, with no reports of clashes or detentions, and ended with an art show in a park near the Presidential palace, La Moneda.

There were also rallies in Arica, Antofagasta, Calama, La Serena, Valparaiso, Concepción, Temuco, Valdivia, Ancud, Coyhaique and Punta Arenas, among other cities.

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